

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A cover for a trailer coupler having a coupler means mounted on the forward portion of a longitudinally extending member of a trailer, said coupler means being adapted to be attached to a ball trailer hitch on a towing vehicle and including an inverted cup portion for receiving the ball hitch, said cup portion having a periphery, said trailer coupler and said ball hitch each presenting geometrically complex outer surfaces, said cover comprising:

an elongated, hollow tubular shield formed from flexible material, said shield having a longitudinal fore and aft axis, a forward end, an aft end, a top, a bottom, port and starboard sides, said forward end having a forwardly extending upper portion defining a pouch for receiving the inverted cup portion therein, said pouch having a downwardly directed opening defined in a bottom side thereof, said downwardly directed opening having a periphery adapted to fit snugly around the periphery of said inverted cup portion, a lower portion of said forward end having a forwardly directed opening defined therein, said forwardly directed opening having a periphery adapted to fit snugly around the ball trailer hitch when said trailer coupler is attached to the ball trailer hitch, said aft end having a rearwardly directed aft opening defined therein, said aft opening having a periphery adapted to fit around the longitudinally extending member of the trailer,

said shield being internally sized to receive said forward portion of said member of said trailer and said coupler means mounted thereon,

whereby the peripheries of the openings of said shield are sealingly engagable with the geometrically complex outer surfaces of said trailer coupler and said ball hitch so that said cover provides a substantially weather resistant enclosure for said trailer coupler when said trailer coupler is attached to said ball hitch.

2. The cover of claim 1, wherein the port and starboard sides of said cover each present a surface for displaying graphical indicia.
3. The cover of claim 1, wherein said forward and aft openings are elasticized.
4. The cover of claim 1, further including strap means within said shield adapted to support longitudinally extending auxiliary apparatus within said shield.
5. The cover of claim 1, wherein said flexible material includes a layer of padding and at least the outer surface of said shield is impervious to moisture.
6. The cover of claim 1, wherein said shield further includes a seam means extending longitudinally from proximate said aft opening toward said front forwardly directed opening and which may be selectively manually opened and closed to facilitate the installation of said shield onto said forward portion of said member and said coupler means mounted thereon.
7. The cover of claim 6, wherein said seam means extends longitudinally along said bottom of said shield.
8. The cover of claim 7, wherein said seam means includes coacting selective locking means on the bottom edges of said port and starboard sides of said shield.
9. The cover of claim 8, wherein said seam means includes fastening means on said bottom edges of said port and starboard sides of said shield.

10. The cover of claim 6, including strap means within said shield adapted to support longitudinally extending auxiliary apparatus within said shield and wherein said seam means, when in the open mode, facilitates access to said strap means.

11. A weather resistant trailer coupler and vehicle hitch apparatus comprising:
a hitch portion adapted to be attachable to a vehicle, said hitch portion including a ball;
a coupler portion operably couplable to the hitch and adapted to be attachable to a forward portion of a longitudinally extending member of a trailer, said coupler including an inverted cup portion for receiving the ball of said hitch, the cup portion having a periphery; and
a cover portion including an elongated, hollow tubular sleeve formed from flexible material, said sleeve having a longitudinal fore and aft axis, a forward end, an aft end, a top, a bottom, and a pair of opposing sides, said forward end having a forwardly extending upper portion defining a pouch for receiving the inverted cup portion therein, said pouch having a downwardly directed opening defined in a bottom side thereof, said downwardly directed opening having a periphery adapted to fit snugly around the periphery of said inverted cup portion, a lower portion of said forward end having a forwardly directed opening defined therein, said forwardly directed opening having a periphery adapted to fit snugly around the hitch portion when the coupler portion is coupled to the hitch portion, the aft end having a rearwardly directed aft opening defined therein, said aft opening having a periphery adapted to fit around the longitudinally extending member of the trailer, the sleeve being internally sized to receive the forward portion of the longitudinally extending member of the trailer and the coupler portion coupled thereto, whereby the peripheries of the openings of the sleeve are sealingly engagable with the outer surfaces of the coupler portion and the hitch portion so that the cover provides a substantially weather resistant enclosure for the trailer coupler when the coupler portion is coupled to the hitch portion.

12. The apparatus of claim 11, wherein said forward and aft openings are elasticized.

13. The apparatus of claim 11, wherein each of said opposing sides of said sleeve presents a surface for displaying graphical indicia.
14. The apparatus of claim 11, further including a strap within said sleeve for supporting longitudinally extending auxiliary apparatus within said sleeve.
15. The apparatus of claim 11, wherein said flexible material includes a layer of padding and at least the outer surface of said sleeve is impervious to moisture.
16. The apparatus of claim 11, wherein said sleeve further includes a longitudinally oriented opening extending from proximate said aft opening toward said forwardly directed opening, said longitudinally oriented opening being selectively manually openable and closable to facilitate the installation of said sleeve onto said hitch portion and said coupler portion.
17. The apparatus of claim 16, wherein said longitudinally oriented opening extends along said bottom of said sleeve.
18. The apparatus of claim 17, wherein said longitudinally oriented opening includes coating selective locking means on the bottom edges of said opposing sides of said shield.
19. The apparatus of claim 18, wherein said longitudinally oriented opening includes fastening means on said bottom edges of said port and starboard sides of said sleeve.

20. The apparatus of claim 16, including a strap within said sleeve adapted to support longitudinally extending auxiliary apparatus within said sleeve, and wherein said longitudinally oriented opening, when in the open mode, facilitates access to said strap.